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IV. — *Literary Reminiscences in the Agricola*

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THE *Agricola* has always been a rich quarry for the parallel seeker. There are in the essay so many obvious reminiscences of earlier writers that it seems to be an almost inexhaustible mine. Scholars are now, however, pretty generally agreed that, taken as a whole, it marks a Sallustian period in Tacitus' literary progress, that it is in a way based on the short historical monograph as developed by Sallust, and that as such it represents the author's first tentative departure from the Ciceronian norm toward that distinctively Tacitean style which he developed in a later period.

Schoenfeld, in a Leipzig program of 1884, *De Taciti studiis Sallustianis*, discussed the general stylistic resemblances between the two historians and called especial attention to the correspondence between *Agricola*, 37 and *Jugurtha*, 101 and to numerous verbal parallels elsewhere. Thiessen, in 1912, *De Sallustii, Livii, Taciti digressionibus*, pointed out the digressions of Sallust as the source of those in Tacitus' *Agricola*. Draeger too and all of the commentators have dwelt on the relation of the later to the earlier writer.

There can be no question that the resemblances are there, no doubt that Sallust is an important source from which Tacitus drew many ideas of form, style, and expression. It is equally true that Zimmerman, *Breslauer Philologische Abhandlungen*, v, 1, finds in the *Agricola* an imposing number of parallels with Seneca, that Furneaux's notes call attention to rather more reminiscences of Livy than of Sallust, that the epilogue to the *Agricola* is generally conceded to echo Cicero's *de Oratore*. And there are many resemblances to still other writers.

Hendrickson's analysis of the *Agricola*, showing conclu-

sively that the history of the proconsulship in Britain in no way disqualified the essay as a eulogistic biography, should discourage the idea of finding any close imitation of the Sallustian monographs by Tacitus, for these are not examples of the encomium as is the later essay (cf. Leo, *Die griech.-röm. Biographie*, 232; and note *narrandi*, Sall. Cat. 4, 5).

Accepting the theory that makes the *Agricola* an encomiastic biography, we should expect to find it a carefully executed piece of rhetoric. It was not brought out hurriedly after the death of Agricola; Tacitus had taken time to elaborate his style with care. He was planning to come before the public with his *Histories* and, no matter how devoted he was to his father-in-law, his own statement in the prologue to the *Agricola* makes it reasonable to believe that he was anxious to make his audience receptive by winning their favour with this less extensive production. The best way to do this was to come before them with a piece of work done as well as he could possibly do it but done in accordance with the rules of the game as that audience understood them.

That he did this so far as the general type of his work is concerned has been demonstrated. That he did it in the matter of detailed workmanship can be demonstrated also.

Furneaux's comments may be taken as fairly typical of the generally accepted view of the relation of the *Agricola* and *Germania* to the monographs of Sallust. On page 5 of his *Germania* Furneaux states flatly that the two essays represent the Sallustian period of Tacitus as the *Dialogus* represents his Ciceronian period. On page 4 he goes so far as to say that Tacitus shows by frequent imitation throughout his writings that he considered Sallust as a model. In another place Furneaux notes the influence of Sallust in the matter of interspersing sententious maxims. On page 11 of the *Agricola* he draws attention to the fact that "all three of these works (the *Agricola*, the *Catiline*, and the *Jugurtha*) begin with a preface in which, notwithstanding all differences of circumstances and subject, not a few resemblances of tone

and sentiment are observable. Then we have in each a biographical sketch of the early career of the principal person." Furthermore he notes the parallel between the description of Britain and that of Africa, the fact that the main narrative is broken by digressions or episodes, that large space is given to speeches, and a full account given of the final battle. He admits the complete unsimilarity of the conclusions.

Before taking up these points in detail, there are certain fundamental features common to Tacitus and Sallust that are worth a moment's notice. Sallust retired in his later years, after an active if somewhat misspent life, determined to write something that should live after him. He had the ambition to rear a monument that should outlast, if not the pyramids, at least his own generation. He was forty-four years old when he published the *Catilinarian Conspiracy*. Tacitus devoted the early years of his life to political activities, of a quieter sort, to be sure, than those of Sallust and more eminently respectable. Disregarding the *Dialogus*, he too was forty-four years old when circumstances permitted him to enter his chosen field of letters. Each man came to an unaccustomed task with the deliberate intent of winning an attentive and if possible a favourable audience. Each man had command of the technical training of his day and a mastery of the literature that had gone before, and each made full and careful use of both.

There is also a somewhat deeper affinity. Tacitus was a member of the Stoic group in imperial Rome. His real heroes are the leaders of the Stoic opposition. His wrath is roused by the degeneracy of the times and his admiration reserved for the old-fashioned virtues. Sallust, after a life of more than Epicurean pleasure, either genuinely or with a wholly deceiving pose adopted the doctrines of the Stoa. His two monographs teem with the terms of Stoic philosophy: he lauds virtue and arraigns luxury, ambition, passion, miserliness, and superstition. The *Catiline*, and even more the *Jugurtha*, almost take on at times the appearance of Stoic

treatises. Nothing was more natural than for Sallust to hark back to his greatest Stoic predecessor and to borrow largely from the *Origines* of Cato. Both Suetonius and Quintilian (as well as numerous others) testify to the extent of such borrowings. It should not therefore come as a great surprise that Tacitus begins his *Agricola* with the words *clarorum virorum*, words which Cato (we have it on Cicero's authority) used at the beginning of his *Origines*. Whether or not he was influenced by Horace's *mores animique virorum clarorum* (and in view of his use of *mores* it seems likely that he was) is of secondary interest; he must have been familiar with the *Origines* and so must his readers. To the Stoic circle of his day this opening phrase was beyond doubt an ingratiating reminiscence.

In spite of these points of resemblance between the two writers, the fact must not be lost sight of that they were writing in different fields: one in the sphere of history, the other in that of biography. Nepos comes nearer to being a model for Tacitus in the way of general type than Sallust. In the introductory chapter to his *Epaminondas* he says that he is going to tell first about his subject's antecedents, then about his education, and finally about his achievements. And, formless as are the *Lives*, the one of Epaminondas presents this outline framed in a rudimentary prologue and epilogue. The *Life of Atticus* is a eulogy as consistent as the *Life of Agricola* and there can be little doubt that the lost *Life of Cato* followed the same lines. In the *Life of Cato* Tacitus may very likely have found a really congenial model. It is hardly surprising, then, to discover (even though we have not the *Cato*) numerous reminiscences of Nepos in the *Agricola*. Nor is it hard to believe, in view of these actual verbal reminiscences, that we ought to consider him a more likely model for the first century biographer than Sallust. That Tacitus so far improved on his model as to make his own work highly original is thoroughly typical of his workmanship in general.

In the matter of detailed borrowings, Tacitus culled widely.

It is easy to show how he drew on a truly remarkable number of his predecessors, and investigation into the sources of his borrowings has attracted the writers of theses and programs for generations. The interesting outcome of such study, however, is not the resulting collection of parallel passages but the understanding made possible of the kind of writer to whom Tacitus turned for help in various lines and of the way in which he handled the material that he borrowed. The first result will emerge as we proceed to examine the second.

It is clear that in producing the *Agricola* Tacitus was still something of an apprentice in the business of writing. The fact that parts of the essay are almost a patchwork composed of bits from the earlier literature shows the painstaking rhetorical student. But another point stands out just as clearly. At the game so popular in the rhetorical schools of his day, making over the fine phrases and *sententiae* of literary tradition, Tacitus was a real master. Monotonous indeed to the teacher at Rome must have been the mass of material presented by ambitious pupils. Subjects worn threadbare by repeated handling were dressed up in language that made pretence of being new and adorned with figures and epigrams and illustrations either new or more usually taken industriously from handy collections of commonplaces. The results must have been almost universally dreary. Tacitus was no longer, in 96 A.D., a pupil in the rhetor's school, but between the time when he had been one and the time when he wrote the *Agricola* he had had no opportunity to practise what he had learned in his school days. He himself, in confessing to a style untried and unskilled, recognizes the *Agricola* for what it is, the tentative first effort of a novice.

This fact must be remembered in order fully to appreciate the success that is attained in the essay. It starts with what seems to us an impossible handicap; at the end it leaves an impression not only of successful achievement and real power but of originality. Unlike the hundreds of mediocre students of his time who spent their efforts vainly flogging dead or

dying horses, Tacitus had the power so to appropriate and make over what he borrowed that in his hands it became something new, crystallized by the infusion of his genius, touched with the irony of his spirit in revolt. In all of the parallel passages that we shall examine it will rarely be true that the result of Tacitus' treatment has not been the improvement of the phrase; regularly it is Tacitus that has raised the ordinary sentence out of the ruck of the commonplace and given it the chance of immortality.

The power to do this marks the truly great literary artist moved by a compelling emotion. Tacitus was not doing tricks with words, making pretty combinations to tickle the fancy of a superficial audience. It is true that he had to appeal to the public as he found it and in ways that they understood, but he wrote from the fulness of a bitter conviction. Within him there had been growing steadily the intense hatred of a regime which had not only robbed him of a beloved father-in-law but had throttled and almost strangled the old Rome of his devoted imagination. It was the depth of emotion expressed by a master of language that created immortal phrases out of mediocre gleanings.

The familiar *vitium parvis magnisque civitatibus commune, ignorantiam recti et invidiam* is the result of the master touch applied to Nepos' more diffuse expression of the idea in Chabrias, 3, 3: *Est enim hoc commune vitium magnis liberisque civitatibus, ut invidia gloriae comes sit et libenter de iis detrahant quos eminere videant altius-neque animo aequo pauperes alienam opulentiam intueantur*. I have quoted the whole passage, although only the first part is used by Tacitus, to show how proverbial some of these phrases became. The last part of the quotation emerges in Velleius Paterculus, 1, 9, 6: *Quam sit adsidua eminentis fortunae comes invidia altissimisque adhaereat*; and it may have been before his mind's eye when he wrote (II. 40. 5): *Numquam eminentia invidia carent*. Paterculus was writing history, but history of a eulogistic nature and under the same sort of rhetorical

influence that led Tacitus to make much of the sententious remark.

More typical of the way in which Tacitus uses his borrowings are two or three other passages in the rhetorical introduction to the essay. In the second chapter Tacitus writes: *Dedimus profecto grande patientiae documentum*. If there were no further use of Curtius Rufus by Tacitus, a single resemblance would seem to be a coincidence, but we shall see later that he probably borrowed a number of phrases from the chronicler of Alexander's career. So Curtius' *singulare certe ediderunt patientiae exemplum* (x, 3, 4), with only one word unchanged, looks like the basis of the more perfect phrase of Tacitus, more perfect in that it avoids hiatus and attains a richer rhythm.

Similar is Tacitus' treatment of Cicero's *tempora timens inimica virtuti* (*Or.* 10, 35) which becomes, in *Agr.* 1, *infesta virtutibus tempora*. Finally, in the third chapter of the prologue an old idea is worked over still more thoroughly. Lucretius had written (1, 556): *Nam quidvis citius dissolvi posse videmus | Quam rursus refici*. For once, and no doubt because he has a poet as a forerunner, Tacitus has expanded rather than compressed the idea. It is not impossible that the germ of the sententious phrases that follow was found in Seneca's *tam malorum quam bonorum conversatio amorem induit* (*Tranq.* 1, 3). At any rate Seneca seems to have contributed more directly the conceits *securitas publica* and *nostri superstes* (*Ep.* 73, 2; *Tranq.* 11, 12, and *Ep.* 30, 5) and perhaps also the phrase *mortalis aevi* which he uses twice (*Cons. Marc.* 25, 1 and *Ep.* 102, 23) as well as *bona conscientia* (*Clem.* 1, 1, 1), none of them apparently commonplaces. It is not however impossible that Livy's *per tot annos, magnam partem vitae* (iv, 24, 5) is, as Golling suggests, partly responsible for Tacitus' *per quindecim annos, grande mortalis aevi spatium*. Tacitus has seized the right combination.

It will be as well to turn directly to the epilogue to get further understanding of Tacitus' methods in using the

phraseology of his predecessors. This chapter begins, as Gudeman has noted, with another reminiscence of the Stoic Seneca, this time from *Ep.* 63, 16: *si modo vera sapientium fama est recipitque nos locus aliquis*. Tacitus is again better than his source: *si quis piorum manibus locus, si, ut sapientibus placet*, etc.

But it is to Cicero and Livy that Tacitus owes most in this peroration. In the *Archias*, 12, 30, Cicero makes the contrast between the sculptured presentment of the physical body and the reproduction of the spiritual qualities: *An statuas et imagines, non animorum simulacra sed corporum, studiose multi summi homines reliquerunt; consiliorum relinquere ac virtutum nostrarum effigiem nonne multo malle debemus, summis ingeniis expressam et politam?* And Livy contributes as much in the following sentence (xxv, 38): *vos quoque velim, milites, non lamentis lacrimisque tanquam extinctos prosequi (vivunt viventque fama rerum gestarum) sed quotienscumque occurrat memoria illorum*, etc. If, finally, we consider the phraseology of Cicero, *de Or.* II, 23, 98, *suam quandam expressit quasi formam figuramque dicendi*, we shall have found most of the ideas and most of the words which go to make up this forty-sixth chapter, especially if we note how the same ideas and words were used by other writers who may have been just as well known to Tacitus. For example, Horace, *Epist.* II, 1, 248: *Nec magis expressi vultus per aenea signa | Quam per vatis opus mores animique virorum | Clarorum apparent*, and again, *cum autem exprimere imaginem consuetudinis atque vitae velimus Epaminondae* (Nepos, *Epam.* I, 3), or finally, Velleius Paterculus, II, 66, 5, who repeats *vivit vivetque* which he presently varies with *manebit*. Perhaps Sallust, *Cat.* 8, is responsible for the idea of the importance of a biographer, best stated by Horace in *Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona*. Pliny was well pleased with the result, as shown by his imitation in the *Panegyric* (55), as well as in a letter (II, 1, 11). His sedulous imitation serves to bring out the striking success with which Tacitus made truly his own a series of commonplaces.

The helpfulness to Tacitus of Cicero's *de Oratore* was not confined to this one instance. It is especially marked in chapters 43-45, *Finis vitae eius*, etc., which are in a way part of the epilogue. In the *de Oratore*, III, 2-3, there is enough material to make extensive quotation worth while. Wex and Furneaux both note this passage.

Fuit hoc luctuosum suis, acerbum patriae, grave bonis omnibus ; sed ii tamen rem publicam casus secuti sunt, ut mihi non erepta L. Crasso a dis immortalibus vita, sed donata mors esse videatur. non vidit flagrantem Italiam bello, ardentem invidia senatum, non sceleris nefarii principes civitatis reos, etc. quis enim non iure beatam L. Crassi mortem illam, quae est a multis saepe defleta, dixerit, cum horum ipsorum sit qui tum cum illo postremum fere conlocuti sunt, eventum recordatus? tenemus enim memoria Q. Catulum, etc. ego vero te, Crasse, cum vitae flore tum mortis opportunitate divino consilio et ornatum et extinctum esse arbitror.

Outside of the more obviously rhetorical parts of the essay, the prologue and the epilogue, the most carefully wrought passages are the speeches of Calgacus and Agricola. In these it would be natural to expect much of the influence of Sallust, for it is generally agreed that the speeches and digressions in Tacitus have a distinctly Sallustian flavour. And the evidence is extensive and familiar. There is no need to recall the coincidences in the large and in detail between the speech of Catiline and the speeches of Calgacus and Agricola, nor between the scenes before and during and after the big battles. The resemblance extends to details of expression like *in armis omnia sita* in *Jug.* 51, 4 and *arma et in his omnia* in *Agr.* 33, 7 (the very slight change has given real distinction to a colourless phrase). No one has ever questioned the influence of Sallust and it is not questioned here. But it does not begin to tell the story.

Such a writer as Curtius Rufus, dealing with history but treating it as a background for his hero Alexander, would in many ways have attracted the attention of Tacitus. The

very nature of Curtius' work was congenial to Tacitus in the extreme. He was impatient of the periods of the earlier historians, a follower of the newer and tenser style; like Salust he delighted in using words in their less common meanings; rhetorician that he was, he was not interested in the technique of battles but preferred to dwell on the more dramatic elements, especially speeches; moralising became to him a second nature. In other words, he was a typical rhetorician of the age of Claudius devoting himself to the writing of history. Tacitus, when he wrote the *Agricola*, was preparing for the publication of his *Histories* and was distinctly interested in style and rhetoric. In the *Agricola* the peculiarities of Curtius' style reappear, improved upon to be sure, but with great prominence.

In chapter 34 Tacitus makes Agricola, in his great speech before the battle, use the figure of the timid wild animals fleeing at the sound of intruders to illustrate the withdrawal of the Caledonians to the remote end of Britain: *pavida et inertia ipso agminis sono pellebantur*. In Curt. III, 8, 10 appears: *ritu ignobilium ferarum, quae strepitu praetereuntium audito silvarum latebris se occulerint*. This might readily be a coincidence. The two writers might each have thought of the same figure, which may have been a commonplace. This might be true even though the sections preceding the tenth in Curtius have a similarly familiar ring: winter is approaching and the troops cannot be divided, exactly the case in Tacitus' story after the battle. But no theory of coincidence is tenable in the face of what occurs later in Curtius. In IV, 14, 7 he gives us the speech of Alexander before the battle of Arbela. *Emensis tot terris in spem victoriae*, he begins. He tells them that the Persians *reprehensos ex fuga . . . metu exangues . . . in eodem vestigio haerere*. Agricola says that the Britains *deprehensi sunt* and that *novissimae res et extremo metu torpor defixere aciem in his vestigiis*. To Alexander, the Persians are *ex latebris suis erutos*, to Agricola, the Britains are *e latebris suis extrusi*. Both speakers

make the double appeal, of glory to the brave, of desperation to the coward. The speech of Darius follows in Curtius. The Persians (like the Britains) are going to fight for liberty. Their wives and children are at hand and Curtius applies to them the word *pignus*, so used by Tacitus but otherwise only once in Livy, in Pliny, Quintilian, and in post-Augustan poetry. There is no chance for flight; the enemy are few in number; this battle will end the war; it is their own cowardice that has hitherto helped the enemy. Finally he appeals to them: *Ite . . . ut quam gloriam accepistis a maioribus vestris posteris relinquatis*. This appeal is strikingly like the conclusion of Calgacus' speech: *Proinde ituri in aciem maiores vestros et posteros cogitate*. There is more in both speeches but the parts cited are convincing. And throughout, Tacitus' treatment has given life and power to all that he took.

It remains to notice a number of the epigrammatic phrases in the *Agricola* that seem to be the result of working over the conceits of earlier writers. In chapter 23, *laudando promptos castigando segnes*, there is pretty clear reflection of Caesar, *B. C.* I, 3: *Laudat promptos atque in posterum confirmat, segniores castigat*. Tacitus has given it character by omitting the unnecessary phrase. Again he put the final touch to a well-known sentiment with his *proinde et honesta mors turpi vita potior* (33). But Nepos gave him the line when he wrote (*Chabrias*, 4, 3): *at ille praestare honestam mortem turpi vitae*. One of Tacitus' best phrases following *iam et mare scrutantur*, chapter 30, is this: *si locuples hostis est, avari, si pauper, ambitiosi*. This is obviously a reworking of Seneca's *sive avarus dominus est mare lucri causa scrutamur, sive ambitiosus*, etc. (*Clem.* I, 3, 5). *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est* is Tacitus' own, but the idea was first put in trenchant form by Caesar, *B. C.* III, 36, 1: *nam plerumque in novitate (rem) fama antecedit*. He contributed rather less of his own when he wrote *proprium humani ingenii est odisse quem laeseris*, for Seneca had already written (*de Ira*, II, 33, 1): *Hoc habet*

pessimum animi magna fortuna insolentis: quos laeserunt et oderunt.

Throughout the essay there are verbal coincidences, in themselves of no particular importance, but interesting in the aggregate for what they indicate of Tacitus' methods and range of reading. Wex and Furneaux, Golling and Gude-man, Kleiber, Thiessen, Woelfflin, and Zimmermann have been foremost in pointing out these verbal coincidences. It will be necessary to cite a considerable number in order to give an indication of their quality and their frequency. I will simply present the parallels without comment.

Bona conscientia, Agr. 1; Sen. Clem. 1, 1, 1. *Magnus atque clarus haberi*, Agr. 1; Sall. Jug. 92. *Loquendi audiendique commercio*, Agr. 2; *commercium sermonum*, Liv. v, 15, 5. *Monumenta clarissimorum ingeniorum*, Agr. 2; Sen. Cons. Helv. 1, 2. *Securitas publica, mortalis aevi, and nostri superstes* in Agr. 3 have already been noted. *Per mutuam caritatem*, Agr. 6; Curt. vi, 7, 4. *Iam vero tempora curarum remissionumque divisa: ubi conventus ac iudicia poscerent, gravis intentus severus et saepius misericors; ubi officio satis factum nulla ultra potestatis persona*, Agr. 9; *cum tempus posceret, laboriosus, patiens . . . ; idem simulac se remiserat . . . luxuriosus*, etc., Nep. Alcib. 1, 2; *distinguit ratione officiorum ac temporum vicissitudinem laboris ac voluptatis*, Cic. Mur. 30, 76. *Ceterum Britanniam qui mortales initio coluerint*, Agr. 11; *Sed qui mortales initio Africam habuerint*, Sall. Jug. 17, 7. *Cetera egregius* (of a man who shows arrogance in ruling), Agr. 16; Liv. 1, 35, 6. *Cruda ac viridis senectus*, Agr. 29; *cruda viridisque senectus*, Verg. Aen. vi, 304. *Fremituque et clamoribus dissonis*, Agr. 33; *fremitum et clamorem dissonum*, Sen. Vit. Beat. 1, 2. *Furto noctis*, Agr. 34; *furtum noctis*, Curt. iv, 13, 9. *Ad arma discursum*, Agr. 35; Sen. de Ira, iii, 2, 3. *Aures verberatas*, Agr. 41; *aures verberantur*, Sen. Cons. Marc. 19, 6. *Sic Agricola simul suis virtutibus, simul vitiis aliorum in ipsam gloriam praeceps agebatur*, Agr. 41; *cum suis virtutibus, tum alienis vitiis magnum esse videamus*, Cic. Imp.

Pomp. 23, 67 (this is a particularly good instance of the rhetorical embellishment of a phrase by Tacitus). *Praecepta in iram*, *Agr.* 42; *Liv.* XXIII, 7. *Vera bona*, *Agr.* 44; *Sen. Ep.* 98, 9 *et passim*.

These citations do not of course by any means exhaust the collection of verbal reminiscences which scholars for centuries have been finding in the *Agricola*. They are intended only to illustrate one sort of 'imitation' practised by Tacitus. Wherever he detected the possibility of effective phrasing he boldly appropriated the material and with the touch of genius made it serve his end.

The traditional criticism, represented by the comments of Furneaux quoted at the beginning of this paper, notes that the *Agricola*, the *Catiline*, and the *Jugurtha* all begin with a rhetorical introduction and then proceed to the biographical sketch of the early career of the principal person. The somewhat philosophical, altogether rhetorical introduction is common to history and biography and technical essays of all sorts. Livy and Curtius Rufus, Nepos and Vitruvius, and every other typical writer of the essay have almost universally made use of it. Furthermore, a biography like the *Agricola* could scarcely fail to proceed to a biographical sketch of the early career of the principal person. The really noteworthy point is the difference of function performed by this sketch in the three essays and the difference of approach which results. In Sallust's essays the story of the hero's early life is an insertion, admittedly outside the normal sphere of history; in the *Agricola*, it is an integral and normal part of the biography. Sallust says in *Cat.* 4, 5: *De cuius hominis moribus pauca prius explananda sunt quam initium narrandi faciam*. The facts about Catiline are distinctly introduced *before* the real subject as stated by Sallust is taken up (cf. 4, 3: *De Catilinae coniuratione quam verissime potero paucis absolvam*.) It is equally true that the *Jugurtha* is the history of an event, not a biography. Sallust says explicitly: *Bellum scripturus sum*. The sketch of Jugurtha's early life is introduced first

by way of preparation for an understanding of the real subject: *Prius quam huiusce modi rei initium expedio, pauca supra repelam.*

The difference in the *Agricola* is patent. *Hic liber*, says Tacitus, *honori Agricolae soceri mei destinatus*. He could not have more clearly announced his work as a biography, especially when these words are taken in conjunction with what he said in the first part of the prologue: *narraturo mihi vitam defuncti hominis*. The early career comes then as no insertion or digression. It is a normal member of a normal biography, and the *Agricola*, beginning in good biographical style, continues in the same style throughout. Such abnormality as there is consists not in the insertion of biographical material into history but in the expansion of certain historical matter in the biography.

Nepos, *Pelop.* I, 1, recognizes the distinction clearly: *Vereor, si res explicare incipiam, ne non vitam eius narrare sed historiam videar scribere*. Tacitus, in his first two chapters, cites earlier biographers and obviously he knew Nepos. Such writers are distinct in his mind from the historians of whom he speaks elsewhere. In *Agr.* 10, 3, for example, he cites *Livius veterum, Fabius Rusticus recentium eloquentissimi auctores*; and in the *Annals*, III, 30, 3: *C. Sallustius rerum Romanorum florentissimus auctor*. It is interesting to note that this latter judgment is expressed in the *Annals*, not in the *Agricola*, and that, as we have seen, Furneaux's notes to the *Agricola* show more parallels with Livy than with Sallust in spite of the fact that the *Agricola* and the *Germania* are held by Furneaux to mark the Sallustian period of Tacitus. The tribute to Livy occurs in the *Agricola* and refers to what must have been a geographical digression,¹ the sort of thing which Tacitus is popularly supposed to have borrowed not from Livy but from Sallust.

The fifteen years of silence through which Tacitus lived to

¹ This fact was called to my attention by my colleague, Professor Floyd Harwood.

be the survivor of his own age gave him time and to spare for intensive study, and there is ample evidence in his written works that he made thorough use of it. Obviously he was attracted to the non-Ciceronian style. Cicero had in reality brought to an end the long controversy between Atticism and Asianism. His blend of the two had become the norm of Latin style and while his chief quarrel was with the Atticists it was he who put the last touch to the periodic sentence which was essentially the ideal of the purist. With Sallust begins a new controversy, that between the Ciceronian norm and the new rhetorical style. Sallust was an admirer of Cato because of Cato's brevity, a brevity which in the earlier writer was the natural outcome of his principle, *rem tene verba sequuntur*, and not a rhetorical brevity. In Sallust the brevity is conscious, a rhetorical device carried to the point of obscurity. Discarding the sonorous period, Sallust sought to embellish his style by the introduction of all the rhetorical elements of surprise: conciseness, archaism, use of unusual words or of ordinary words with an unusual meaning, poetical words and figures, sententious maxims. He built, to be sure, on the foundation of Cato and Caesar, but the foundation is only just visible in the completed structure.

Rhetorical style continued after Sallust to be the recognized antagonist of the Ciceronian. Quintilian, who held a brief for Cicero, warns against it, but popular taste was with the innovators. The rhetorical training, the recitations, the whole atmosphere of literary Rome for more than a century supported the new style until Ciceronianism became itself the opposition. Curtius Rufus, Velleius Paterculus, Seneca, and finally Tacitus too were the products of the school.

The results of Tacitus' years of study, first embodied in the *Agricola*, are just what we ought to expect. For general structure he goes, not to Sallust, but to the conventional biographical model of the rhetor's school which, in spite of

real originality in treatment, he followed closely. In the historical sections he draws freely in the matter of phraseology and often of general arrangement from Livy and Sallust and also from Caesar. Striving as he did for an almost archaisitic brevity, he made free use of Cato, Caesar, and Nepos, and the reminiscences of these writers are frequent and clear. For rhetorical devices he had many models. The highly rhetorical description of the big battle and the impassioned speeches echo Sallust and Curtius Rufus and Velleius Paterculus. For sententious maxims and poignant phrases all of the rhetorical literature was grist to his mill. Seneca contributes much; Nepos and Sallust, Curtius, Velleius Paterculus, occasionally the poets Lucan and Vergil, Valerius Maximus, and probably many a lost writer contributed hints that made possible his sustained brilliancy. Even Cicero of the opposition made no mean contribution.

The *Agricola* was a deliberate rhetorical appeal to the audience of Tacitus' day. Seneca, *Contr.* ix, 1, 13, tells how Fuscus, charged with borrowing a Greek *sententia*, freely admitted the appropriation, claiming that his effort was to outdo the best. This was evidently the established practise and it is precisely what Tacitus did. He rarely borrowed word for word from any author. Regularly he improved and made his own what suited his need in the work of other men. It is this tendency toward deliberate rhetorical phrase-making that Quintilian inveighs against in his criticism (viii, 5, 31): *Non multas plerique sententias dicunt, sed omnia tanquam sententias*. But Tacitus attained his end. He did speak many 'sentences' and in the *Agricola* the rhetoric of the day achieved real greatness.